

have a responsibility for prevention whenever an opportunity arises. This is most important when relating to head, eyes and spine: 'The first law of head injury — "Prevention is better than cure" ... The second law of head injury is "If you can't prevent, protect".'

Sport for all could mean sports injuries for all, but this does not need to be the case. *Sports injuries: recognition and management* will be very useful to doctors of first contact with injuries, sports or otherwise. Perhaps the book should also be read by those who have no interest in this field as there is much in it for them to consider.

RICHARD J ROBERTSON  
*General practitioner, Bristol*

#### **EMPLOYING STAFF (4th edition)**

*Norman Ellis*

*British Medical Journal, London (1990)*  
121 pages. Price £7.95

The fact that this is the fourth edition of this useful little book speaks for itself. The author is well known as a member of the staff of the British Medical Association who has been involved for many years in helping practices who have organizational problems.

The world of staff employment is now a complex minefield of potential litigation for the unwary and judging by some of the cases quoted, doctors fall into this category. Most of the book deals with issues arising from contract law and covers many difficult areas such as the rights of expectant mothers or the problems associated with dismissing staff. Regulations have also changed in regard to the appointment of part-time staff so updating was required in this area. On this and many other issues the book gives clear directions and, where necessary, sources of further reference.

This book is concise and invaluable to any practice. The target audience should really be practice managers rather than general practitioners but it is probably required reading for anyone who is involved in employing staff.

K J BOLDEN  
*Senior lecturer, Department of General Practice,  
Postgraduate Medical School, Exeter*

#### **TOTAL PARTICIPATION — TOTAL HEALTH Reinventing the Peckham experiment for the 1990s**

*Alex Scott-Samuel (ed)*

*Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh (1990)*  
45 pages. Price £3.50

I had previously read about the Peckham health centre in the context of providing total care to a community and I regarded it as too difficult to revive in the 1990s. This little book took me through the history of the experiment, its founding ideals and some of the reasons for its demise. It was first considered in 1925, but planning and fund raising began in earnest in 1929. It was opened in 1935 and closed in 1950 because of government indifference and lack of financial assistance.

'The centre' as it was called locally was a place where all the family could come and spend their leisure time and also see the doctor for an annual overhaul. There was a swimming pool, gymnasium, badminton court/theatre, adult's games area, children's and babies' play areas and a cafeteria which doubled as a dance hall. It enriched the lives of those who attended, encouraged individuality, spontaneity and responsibility and carried out serious scientific research as shown by a series of published papers. The pioneers of this experiment concentrated on health rather than disease in a holistic manner. Families at-

tended together and the annual overhaul encompassed their biological, nutritional, medical and social development and functioning.

In the 1980s we rediscovered health promotion, accepted holistic care and complementary or 'alternative' therapies, recognized the importance of diet in healthy living and saw the foolishness of destroying our environment. The new contract should encourage preventive aspects of health care, but will it lead to greater patient participation? Can we provide social support systems which contribute so much to people's enjoyment and quality of life? The Peckham health centre will be hard to emulate.

JOHN COHEN  
*General practitioner, London and senior lecturer in primary  
health care, University College and Middlesex School of  
Medicine, London*

#### **HRT AND OSTEOPOROSIS**

*J O Drife, J W W Studd (eds)*

*Springer-Verlag, London (1990)*  
394 pages Price £60.00

'A realistic HRT [hormone replacement therapy] service for the UK would be GP based, using opposed oestrogen therapy without routine endometrial biopsy but with gynaecology clinic support for endometrial biopsy after abnormal bleeding. Breast self-examination should be encouraged and these women should make use of the national breast screening programme.'

This is the view of David Barlow who provides a superb summing up of the present situation regarding the use of hormone replacement therapy in the community. David Barlow is one of the contributors to *HRT and osteoporosis*, an interesting and worthwhile collection of the papers presented at the 22nd study group of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, held in January 1990.

The format consists of short chapters with clear illustrations followed by lively discussion of controversial issues. Rapid publication has ensured that up-to-date information is given on pituitary function, hormones acting on bones, experimental work on collagen, the shortcomings of much experimental work on depression, the treatment of depression with oestrogen, patients' views of osteoporosis and the cardiovascular effects of oestrogen and the combined oral contraceptive pill. An important discussion on the effects of oestrogen and the combined oral contraceptive pill on the risk of breast cancer is also presented. A series of recommendations at the end of the book allows the individual general practitioner and the individual patient to formulate a practical policy for the use of hormone therapy.

*HRT and osteoporosis* is that rarity, a comprehensive and authoritative collection of original research and debate which is still up-to-date by the time that it is printed. Buy it now or recommend it for the shelves of your local postgraduate library.

JEAN COOPE  
*General practitioner, Bollington, Cheshire*

#### **MEDICAL POWER IN PRISONS**

**The prison medical service in England 1774-1989**

*Joe Sim*

*Open University Press, Buckingham (1990)*  
212 pages. Price £10.99 (p/b), £32.50 (h/b)

This book looks at the prison medical service from a sociological standpoint. It makes difficult and disturbing reading. Indeed, some of the propositions challenge the professional view of the doctor as the advocate of the patient within prisons.

The author begins by commenting on the deterrent effect of prisons in society: he suggests that when the prison regime is hard criminals will be put off offending whereas when regimes are soft, crime rates will rise. Prisoners are punished by being deprived of their liberty and further punished by the harsh conditions in prisons. The author examines the development of the prison medical service from 1774 to the present day in the context of this perception of the role of prisons.

The author argues that doctors in prisons, rather than being the benevolent advocates of their patients' good, have been intimately involved in reinforcing the discipline of prison regimes. Examples of this include a review of the use of drugs in the control of prisoners and the use of medical diagnoses to classify deviant behaviour. Commenting on the management of women in prisons the author claims that the intervention of medical professionals is at least in part governed by the priorities of a particular prison, and this is claimed to be more often the case with women prisoners than with men.

This view of the role of the medical officer in British prisons is a deeply disturbing one, but no alternative is suggested. If this perception of the medical role in prison is justified, one is left wondering how much of a socially controlling role doctors play in society, particularly towards patients with a deviant life style.

EDWIN MARTIN  
*General practitioner, Bedford*

**TREATMENT AND PROGNOSIS: GENERAL PRACTICE**  
*M Drury and R Hobbs (eds)*  
*Heineman Medical, Oxford (1990)*  
364 pages. Price £30.00

This ambitious text is organized into conventional specialist systems and begins with a 'disease directory' for each body system. However, the authors are drawn from the ranks of general practice. Each section starts with a thumbnail sketch of epidemiology and conventional clinical features followed by subsections on progress, treatment and follow up. Two or three key references are included in each section. The style is concise and the information condensed for ready reference. The editors have succeeded in maintaining a remarkably consistent standard from their 21 contributors.

The text differs from others in the same series by a number of attempts to introduce the contextual and personal elements of 'treatment': the editors have tried to honour the principles of their discipline. Unfortunately, the compact nature of the book and the biomedical dominance of the series have almost squeezed out any family orientation to treatment. However, general practitioners will enjoy the quick and easy access to the information included.

N C H STOTT  
*Professor of general practice, University of Wales College of Medicine*

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### TRAINING SCHEMES

#### ABERYSTWYTH VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME FOR GENERAL PRACTICE

Applications are invited from doctors seeking a three year VT rotation starting 1 August 1991.

The Scheme is approved for MRCGP and the appropriate posts qualify for DCH, D Obst, RCOC and the Diploma in Geriatric Medicine.

Aberystwyth is a coastal University town in beautiful countryside.

The Scheme is of three years duration and consists of a rotation through four of the following six month posts in hospital and two in General Practice. The hospital posts are (number of posts available in brackets) Paediatrics (2), Obstetrics and Gynaecology (2), General Medicine (1), ENT and Ophthalmology (1), Psychiatry (2), Geriatrics (2), Accident and Emergency and Orthopaedics (2). There are six attached training Practices.

The half day release course is on Tuesday afternoons in the academic year and is a three year modular course.

Candidates should hold or be preparing to obtain a current driving licence. Accommodation is available if required, during hospital employment and at two of the Practices.

Please write for application form and prospectus to the VTS Administrator, 26 North Parade, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 2NF by 1 May 1991.

### COURSES

#### THE EARLY BIRD G.P. REFRESHER COURSE

PLYMOUTH MEDICAL CENTRE  
3rd - 7th JUNE, 1991

This popular event is to be held again this year. It will be timetabled from 7.00 am to 12.30 pm, which will qualify for 25 hours PGCEA approval. There will be an additional 3 hours approval available on one afternoon. The course will include lectures, sessions with Consultants and some group work. It will cover a wide range of subjects relevant to general practice. Course fee £220.00.

Applications to: Miss Joan Mitchell, Postgraduate Administrator, Plymouth Medical Centre, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth PL6 8DH. Telephone (0752) 792715.

### SITUATIONS VACANT

#### REPLACEMENT PARTNER

required for busy progressive five partner inner city training and teaching practice. An interest in family planning and paediatrics preferred. Well equipped purpose-built cost/rent premises. Full primary health care team, with University attachment, recently computerised.

Applicants interested in job-sharing welcome to apply. Applicants should also have enthusiasm, drive and a sense of humour. Practice profile available on request. Please apply in writing with full CV to: The Practice Manager, The Park Road Group Practice, The Elms Medical Centre, 3 The Elms, Liverpool L8 3SS. Closing date: 30 April 1991.

#### GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY

Enthusiastic, happy practice has trainee vacancy for one year commencing 1/8/91. Four young partners, three of whom have been accredited as trainers. Computerised practice with attached Cottage Hospital, including casualty. Full participation in Highland VTS; including three week-long residential courses.

Rural setting in beautiful countryside close to Cairngorms with ample opportunity for all popular leisure pursuits including ski-ing, climbing, fishing, sailing, golf and squash.

Handwritten letter with CV to Dr S B Mathers, The Health Centre, Grantown-on-Spey PH26 3HR.